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ABSTRACT

This handbook for faculty advisors seeks to clarify Edgecombe Community College's (ECC's) (North Carolina) advising theories and concepts. The handbook is designed for instructors as well as program chairpersons and coordinators who are assigned the responsibility of advising students in their programs. The guide is divided into five sections: section 1 offers an overview of the basic theory and concepts of advising; section 2 explores the shared responsibilities in the advisor/advisee relationship; section 3 looks at the issue of advising Special Populations; section 4 offers practical suggestions for getting started; and section 5 concludes with a look at the importance of advising and core values, and offers a referral directory. The handbook gives practical scenarios that can be used by advisors in their initial meetings with students. A list of 11 discussion points for the first meeting includes such questions as: "What high school did you graduate from?" "Where do you live?" "What led you to choose this major?" and "What are your goals after graduation?" The guide suggests saving the answers to the questions in the student's file for future reference. The handbook also offers sample questions for subsequent meetings, such as: "How are your classes going?" "When do you plan to graduate?" and "Let's review a copy of your most recent resume." The guide also offers practical advice for improving communication between the advisor and the student. (NB)

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FACULTY ADVISOR'S HANDBOOK

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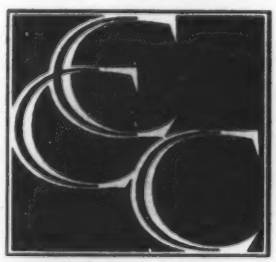

EDGECOMBE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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ECC FACULTY ADVISOR'S HANDBOOK

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FACULTY ADVISING HANDBOOK

SECTION I
INTRODUCTION TO ECC ADVISING THEORY AND CONCEPTS

An increasing interest in improving the quality of academic advising at the national level has motivated extensive research among America's educational institutions. The ECC Faculty Advising Handbook incorporates this research in an effort to maintain and improve upon an established reputation for quality advising. Recognized among its peer institutions for the high level of personal attention and service provided to students, ECC seeks to provide faculty advisors with the resources necessary to carry on the tradition. In standards and guidelines for academic advising that reflect over six years of research by several hundred higher education professionals, the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) describes the primary purpose of advising as follows:

The primary purpose of an academic advising program is to assist students in the development of meaningful educational plans that are compatible with their life goals. Academic advising should be viewed as a continuous process of clarification and evaluation.

ECC agrees with this definition of advising. The following pages describe ECC's expectations of the advising process based on this definition. The ECC Faculty Advisor Handbook includes both theory (the concepts behind the process) and practice (realistic, practical advice on how to conduct advising).

Rationale of ECC Advising Program
ECC's College Mission Statement centers on fulfilling educational, cultural, and training needs. Because students' educational needs cannot be met if programs are not completed, retention is a primary issue. Studies prove that effective academic advising increases student retention. Retaining students through program completion assures that the college is living up to its stated mission. The ECC Faculty Advisor's Handbook supports advisors in their ongoing efforts to guide, advise, and retain students as they plan, develop, and complete their chosen programs of study.

Purpose of the Handbook
The Faculty Advisor's Handbook is written for program chairpersons and coordinators who are assigned responsibility for advising students that enroll in their programs. It also is intended to be a reference for instructors who occasionally assist chairs and coordinators with advising duties. It may also be a good general reference for instructors as they advise students on informal bases.

The Handbook is not intended to be an all-inclusive advising reference. It is most effective when used in conjunction with several other college publications that are issued to faculty upon employment:

- Edgecombe Community College Catalog
- ECC Employee Handbook
- ECC Faculty Handbook

The Handbook is divided into five sections:

- **Section I** provides an overview of the basic theory and concepts of advising.
- **Section II** describes advising as an instructional process by exploring the responsibilities shared in the advisor/advisee relationship.
- **Section III** focuses on the advising of Special Populations.
- **Section IV** includes practical suggestions for getting started.
- **Section V** concludes with a look at the power of advising, the importance of core values, and a referral directory.

Goals and Objectives of the ECC Advising Program

The following goals describe the primary outcomes students can expect as a result of effective faculty advising. Advisors should conduct advising interactions with these goals in mind:

Advising goals

1. Students will clarify career and life goals
2. Students will develop educational plans suited to career goals
3. Students will select appropriate courses and other educational experiences
4. Students will interpret and understand program requirements
5. Students will be aware of available educational resources
6. Students will evaluate their progress toward established goals
7. Students will develop sound decision-making skills
8. Advisors will communicate data and feedback regarding student needs, preferences, and performance for use in institutional policy-making

Advising objectives

ECC advisors should consider and practice the following objectives that describe how advising goals might be achieved:

1. Minimize the frustration of students and faculty during registration and drop-add periods.
2. Ensure that all students have access to reliable and valid academic advising services at all times throughout the academic year.
3. Ensure that all academic advisors provide specific and accurate information.
4. Maximize student awareness of short and long range educational goals.
5. Facilitate successful attainment of students' educational/career goals.
6. Facilitate students' achievement of GPAs consistent with their abilities.
7. Involve as many faculty in student advisement as possible.
8. Involve qualified students in assisting other students with advisement procedures and the mechanics of registration.
9. Improve the retention of students in collegiate programs.
10. Integrate the resources and expertise of professional student services personnel and faculty in the delivery of advisement services.

11. Ensure that all students have access to a caring and personal relation with some "important" person in the college community.

12. Prepare and distribute materials to assist advisors in providing correct information to students regarding registration procedures, academic regulations, and graduation requirements.

13. Ensure that all advisors are informed as to the various campus resources, which may be utilized for referral purposes.

14. Maintain an on-going, in-service training program for all individuals involved in the delivery of academic advisement services.

15. Encourage all students to seek advisement from their designated advisor at least once each semester at a time other than the peak periods of registration or other major administrative programs.

16. Ensure that all advisors have access to necessary student records.

SECTION II
THE ADVISOR-ADVISEE RELATIONSHIP

Advisors Make the Difference
Research has demonstrated that one of the most powerful influences on student persistence in college is individual attention from faculty members. Students frequently judge the worth of their academic experience from their interactions with faculty members. In a national survey, college presidents ranked academic advising as a leading factor in student retention, and improving academic advising has been one of the most frequently cited strategies to increase student retention in the past decade. Academic advising can positively influence the educational and personal development of students.

While the ultimate responsibility for making informed decisions about life goals and educational plans rests with the individual student, the academic advisor is an important catalyst in the process. The advisor assists and supports the student in the decision-making process by helping to identify and assess alternatives and consequences of decisions.

Advising is an Instructional Process
The advisor at ECC advises students as a part of her/his teaching responsibilities. In concurrence with our philosophy, advising is an instructional process lead by the teacher. As in any teaching situation,

1. First the teacher (the advisor) defines the nature of the content unit (academic advising).
2. Secondly, the advisor addresses the specific components of advising necessary for success (the professional relationship of student and advisor).
3. Finally, the advisor stresses the mutual responsibility of this process (the successful completion of the student's academic goals). The advisor must provide accurate and relevant materials to the advisee throughout this professional relationship.

The advisee acquires the information needed to assume final responsibility for course scheduling and successful completion of all graduation requirements in a timely framework. For many advisees, this will be their first model of a successful professional relationship. Questioning the advisor and other ECC personnel for the academic and career information necessary enables the advisee to meet educational goals identified as a result of this search. The advisee must provide accurate information and relevant materials to the advisor throughout this professional relationship.

Advising Responsibility: What It Is.
Advising is a responsibility shared by faculty and students. It is not, however, the advisor's responsibility to set goals, choose courses, or make decisions **for** students. Neither is it solely the **advisor's** responsibility to see that students fulfill all requirements and complete all necessary paperwork. **The advisor's task is to guide the student toward accepting responsibility for mature academic decision-making.** Keeping this provision always in mind, we can state that advisors' responsibilities include the following:

1. Using data to provide accurate information about educational options, requirements, policies, and procedures

2. Planning an educational program consistent with students' interests and abilities

3. Assisting students in continual monitoring and evaluation of their educational progress

4. Helping students to meet special educational needs through adequate referrals to other resources of the institution

5. Helping students understand the nature and purpose of higher education

6. Helping students to learn to accept responsibility for their own actions and decisions

7. Helping students to clarify their values and goals

Advising Responsibility: What It Isn't

Rather than the joint process described above, advising sometimes is mistaken for an isolated task performed for students by advisors prior to the registration period. Advising is not something advisors do **to** or **for** students, but it is something advisors and students do **together** over a period of time. Advisors should avoid advising situations that resemble the following:

1. Just obtaining a signature to register

2. A conference held once a term

3. Focused only on a student's academic experience

4. Telling students what to do

5. A judgmental process

6. Personal counseling

7. Supplementary to the educational mission of the institution

8. A paper relationship

Showing Concern for the Individual Student

An important factor in the advising process for ECC students is having an academic advisor who shows concern for them as individuals. Students are more likely to value the information and follow the advice given to them when they recognize the faculty advisor's genuine interest and concern.

Most faculty advisors can quickly become qualified to help students select courses; however, many faculty advisors struggle with building the personal relationship that is important for effective advising. To be truly effective, you should be able to go beyond routine course scheduling to help students achieve their academic and career goals. This section is intended to help you understand the importance of your interactions with advisees and to suggest ways to improve relationship building and communication with students.

The questions you ask a student can be those that you use to seek information (closed-ended) and those that you use to build a relationship (open-ended). It may be helpful to distinguish the types of questions and their purposes. Try to use open-ended questions to encourage students to talk rather than closed questions that can be answered in a few words. Closed questions can shut down communication. Some examples:

Open	Closed
"Could you tell me a little about your English Class?"	"Do you attend English class?"
"How do you feel about English class?"	"Do you like English class?"
"How do you feel about the time you spent on the test?"	"How long did it take you to finish the test?"

One very important aspect of successful academic advising is providing the student with personalized attention. Some simple methods for accomplishing this:

- Smile
- Refer to the student by first name
- Maintain an attitude of acceptance and respect

Another important (yet commonly overlooked) method to communicate interest in the student is non-verbal communication, or body language:

- Position yourself at an appropriate distance
- Face the student squarely
- Maintain comfortable eye contact

The most important element in effective advising is good listening skills. Advisors should use active listening to understand what the student is really saying:

- Pay careful attention when the student is speaking
- Pay attention to the student's non-verbal communication (tone of voice, posture, expression, eye contact, etc.)
- Wait for speaker to finish before responding
- Suspend judgment until you have heard the student
- Clear your mind of distractions
- Focus on the central idea -- don't get lost in details

It is also a good technique while listening to clarify what you believe the student is saying:

- Note the content of student's message and feelings: repeat back, making sure you have heard correctly
- Communicate understanding of feelings, thoughts, and behaviors from the student's frame of reference [Example: "How do you feel about the professor's comments in class?"]

It is also important to try to avoid shutting down the speaker by:

- Arguing
- Interrupting
- Judging, criticizing, or diagnosing
- Ordering or moralizing
- Misinterpreting

Another way to excel as an advisor is to practice effective speaking skills when meeting with students. Attempt to word all of your comments toward the understanding of the student's needs. Some examples:

- "Could it be that...."
- "I wonder if...."
- "What I guess I'm hearing is...."
- "It seems you're feeling a little...."
- "I get the impression that...."
- "If I understand you...."

Giving Good Advice

Giving good advice is what advising is all about! Academic advisors need to base their advice on students' career and life goals, interests, and abilities to complete a proposed academic load. As the academic advisor, you should gain an understanding of each student's interests and goals as you get acquainted. It is also important to assess each student's academic performance and to tailor advice for the student in that vein. Listed below are some suggestions for assessing student progress and helping individuals understand the options they have as ECC students:

1. **Encourage students to take a challenging, yet balanced, load**.

   Balance a term by using humanities or social science electives.
   Avoid combining extremely challenging courses or too many labs in same term.
   Do not allow too many writing intensive or distance learning courses in one semester.
   Mix major courses with electives

2. **Compare current course load to past performance**.

   Determine if students have performed adequately in the past with this number of units (as defined by ECC standards and students' personal aspirations).
   Look at courses to determine if load is balanced. (Example - Are any of the courses in the proposed load known to be especially difficult or easy?)
   Look at past performance in similar subject areas to see if any of the proposed courses are in areas of known difficulty for this student.
   Decide if the student's expectations and aspirations are reasonable relative to the proposed load
   Suggest a different mix of courses, if necessary

3. **Be aware of academic performance requirements for scholarships**.

   Ask students about scholarships they may have
   Adjust course load to an appropriate level if students are financially dependent on a scholarship to stay in school.
   Keep in mind that many younger students must have a full load to be carried on their parent's health insurance.

4. **Estimate Total Student Load**.

   Balance the academic load around all activities that students may be involved with including work-study or other work commitments.
   Suggest a weekly calendar to balance work hours, class hours, and study time.

5. **Students are very sensitive to comments from advisors about their academic ability. Be tactful when providing potentially negative information**.

   Encourage students to reach their potential. Early in their experiences at ECC, students may be looking for short cuts and the easy way -- try to help them focus on their long-term goals. This is a good time to discuss the "easy course" pitfalls.

Relating To Students about Yourself
Some of the most useful advice a student can receive from the advising relationship is that which you relate to the student about yourself. Being able to speak from a personal real-life experience is a powerful way to enlighten students to the many possible paths their lives and careers can take. Whenever possible, you may want to relate, in a professional manner, personal experiences with making academic and career decisions. Such experiences can serve as examples to show students how choices made at the undergraduate level can influence career development. This is not meant to imply that every student should be encouraged to follow in the footsteps of the advisor. However, it is often true that a student can benefit from a glimpse of what types of decisions brought you to be the successful professional you are today.

Personal Relationships with Advisees
Advisors sometimes wonder how much information to seek from students. As students vary in amount of information they are comfortable sharing with a faculty advisor, an effective guideline is to limit your questioning and discussion to academic and career issues. However, you should be prepared to deal with any personal questions that may arise and deal with them accordingly. Some students may feel uncomfortable talking about their personal lives, but others will quickly volunteer unsolicited personal information.

SECTION III
ADVISING SPECIAL POPULATIONS OF STUDENTS

Advisors should recognize that students come to ECC with varied geographic, religious, cultural, ethnic, academic, and physical attributes and capabilities. These differences should be considered in the advising process. Here are some of the unique students that advisors may encounter at ECC:

Non-Traditional (Older) Students: The average age of ECC students is 27-28 years old. These students often have special requirements, concerns, and constraints on their time that separate them from younger students. They often need help developing a sense of community as well as help with specific concerns such as housing, day care, career planning, and social networking.

Because these students are older, they often bring a different level of maturity and depth of exposure to their education than the more traditional student. However, you should be aware that these students may often lack confidence in their ability as students and may need much encouragement. At the other extreme are some students who have an unrealistic view of the challenges of ECC -- these students who are over confident regarding their abilities to handle both the rigors of ECC and full time employment or full time child care. These students need advisors who can help them develop a realistic program.

Transfer Students: A larger number of students wishing to transfer to a 4-year College or University attend ECC each year.

Advising transfer students can present many challenges. These students need to know exactly which courses will transfer to which University. Even with the comprehensive articulation agreement with the North Carolina University System, individual schools and programs have specific requirements. Faculty advisors need to work especially closely with Student Services to ensure that the students understand how their coursework will mesh with their intended target College or University. Also, advisors need to help students realize if the student changes career goals, some courses may not transfer.

Students in Academic Difficulty: Students with Warning or Probationary status are often those most in need of careful advising. Paradoxically, these are the students least likely to seek out their advisors or to follow through on the advice received. They can try the patience of the most experienced advisors. However, many advisors find that helping these students succeed can be the most rewarding advising experience.

Many students in academic difficulty lack specific skills such as time management, proper study habits, or self-discipline. They usually are reluctant to seek help and do not know what resources are available to assist them. However, if they are willing to make a commitment to change old habits and learn new skills, they can learn the strategies that are needed to be successful academically at ECC.

You can play a critical role by offering your assistance to these students. The Student Support Specialist can assist students to improve their weaknesses. Referring these students to the Student Support Specialist can make a real difference. You are encouraged to refer students to this program.

When professional counseling is warranted, the Student Services office, can provide a range of services. If a student's desire for assistance leaves you feeling uncomfortable or if you find yourself unsure of how to respond, your own uneasiness is an important indicator in making a decision to refer to Student Services.

Learning Disabled Students: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states: "No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States...shall solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) extends some of the provisions of Section 504.

A learning disability is a disorder that affects the manner in which individuals with normal or above average intelligence take in, retain, and express information. It is commonly recognized as a significant deficit in one or more of the following areas: oral expression, basic reading skills, reading comprehension, mathematical calculation or problem solving. Individuals with learning disabilities also may have difficulty with sustained attention, time management or social skills.

Many college students with learning disabilities are intelligent, talented, and capable. Typically, they have developed a variety of strategies for compensating for their learning disabilities. However, the degree of severity of the disability varies from individual to individual.

According to federal regulations, students with documented disabilities have the same legal entitlements as all other students at ECC. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. Federal regulations mandate "reasonable accommodation" for learning disabled students in the same way that they mandate curb cuts and ramped entrances to classroom buildings for physically disabled students.

In order to qualify for accommodations at ECC, a student must provide appropriate documentation in a timely manner. This documentation is then reviewed Vice President of Student Services, and accommodations are made based on that are review. When accommodations are appropriate, the student is notified of the arrangements. You might tell your advisees that if they have any special needs, to make them known to the proper person.

International Students: The diversity of ECC's student population makes it unique. All new students can experience feelings of loneliness and homesickness during the first days at ECC. But for international students the emotional discomfort that comes as a result of separation is exacerbated by the cultural adjustment. Language, food, social behavior, nonverbal communication, and academic expectations are but a few of the challenges which international students face as they make their adjustment to ECC.

The challenge in advising international students is to understand that they have common concerns both socially and academically, but at the same time, each international student has his or her own specific questions and concerns. Some international student concerns are topics that include immigration matters, social and cultural differences, financial matters and personal concerns.

SECTION IV
PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR ADVISORS

This section provides practical advice including specific strategies and "how to's" for advisors. The section begins by breaking the advising process into five component parts before discussing basic strategies. The remainder of the section describes how advisors might initiate and conduct initial and subsequent advising sessions with students.

The Component Parts of Advising
As advisors prepare to meet with student advisees, it may be helpful to consider the five component parts involved in the advising process. This may help advisors structure initial interviews.

1. Conveying the purpose of the College improves the quality of life and the educational and economic base of the service area. The College prepares adults for the workforce through certificate, diploma, and associate degree programs as well as life-long learning opportunities. The College strives to meet the needs of the student population, business community, area industries, and public agencies by providing low-cost, geographically accessible education at convenient times.

2. Information giving-includes advice and consultation about registration, course offerings, faculty interests and expertise, degree programs, educational policies and regulation, as well as administrative procedures.

3. Short-range program planning-includes advice and consultation on semester-by-semester program planning, selection of specific courses, advice on specialized course formats like distance learning, studio, laboratory, lecture and work co-op programs, and occupations.

4. Long-range planning-includes advice and consultation about educational and professional objectives suited to student demonstrated abilities and interests, as well as identification of the relationship between courses, programs and occupations, and the monitoring of the students' progress toward Educational/Career goals.

5. Student referring--recognizes that the academic advisor cannot possibly meet all student needs but hat specialized campus services are available for advice and consultation complementary to the knowledge and skill of the advisor. The advisor helps to identify services for special needs, interest, and abilities that may be served at various locations within the ECC community.

Advising Strategies
As advisors address these various parts, it may be helpful to consider the following strategies for building rapport with and understanding of the particular student:

1. **Become acquainted with the advisee in as many aspects as possible**.
   Knowing the academic abilities and background of the advisee is important. Having good documentation such as high school courses with grades, rank in graduating class, Placement Test scores, transfer courses and grades from other schools and present academic status is essential when assessing a student's ability and future direction.

2. **Explore the objectives, interests, and motivations of the advisee**. The advisee's actual certainty of future objectives and goals may be difficult to ascertain. Some knowledge of the advisee's non-academic background--such as home influence, hobbies, and friends--may make more thorough advising possible.

3. **Develop rapport with advisees**. Humanity is something you both have in common. If the student knows the advisor is a professional person who has a genuine interest in students, the advising process becomes much more beneficial for both advisor and advisee. The student should be encouraged to become acquainted with other faculty members in the department, for multiple contacts can be useful to the student who is attempting to assess personal goals.

4. **Be knowledgeable of ECC rules, policies, regulations, and procedures, which affect academic programs and activity**. Every advisor must be well informed regarding current academic policies and procedures, for these are the foundations on which all advisement efforts will be built. Review of the College policies, and review of new policy changes should be a regular activity of each advisor before beginning each registration period. Familiarity with courses generally taken by your advisees can make the advising process smoother and more successful.

5. **Evaluate student motivation**. Enhancing a student's motivation by capitalizing on good academic planning can be a very helpful strategy. While lack of motivation is generally recognized as the most common cause of poor academic performance, no clear-cut methods to help a student achieve maximum motivation have been developed.

    - Early in the program choose courses in the student's academic strengths, interests, and background.
    - Help the student, when possible, to have a chance to build on success rather than failure.
    - Challenge capable students to continue their efforts toward academic excellence.
    - Explain the rewards of a strong academic program and associated good grades.

6. **Be aware of the limitations of advising**. Obviously, an advisor cannot make decisions for an advisee but can be a sympathetic listener and offer various alternatives for the advisee's consideration. Advisors cannot increase the ability of a student, but they can encourage the maximum use of that ability. While advisors cannot change some aspects of class schedule or employment loads, the students can be referred to the proper offices for such adjustments when desirable. Generally, advisors should not attempt to personally handle complex problems concerning financial aid, mental or physical health, or personal and social counseling. When these situations do arise, the faculty advisor should refer students to professional personnel who are specially trained and knowledgeable about dealing with such problems. Begin by referring the student to an ECC counselor.

The Initial Interview

Do you remember the first time you talked with your college advisor?

The **teachable moment** is there in that initial interview that you may have now forgotten. It is a moment that will change your students' lives. It is a moment that may have changed your life. Students deserve your time, your attention, and they need you to listen. Whatever else this relationship becomes, they need eye contact and at least 60 seconds of your total attention during that initial meeting.

The demands on your time are great. Often during pre-registration and registration, your frustration is high and students must wait for your attention. You do have referral resources - so use them.

Sample Questions for First Meeting

The first meeting with a student should focus on getting to know the student and discussing your role as an advisor. Some students will talk freely and readily provide the information when asked to tell a little about themselves. If the student appears shy or says very little, you can use some of the following questions to obtain information and build rapport with the student.

- What high school did you graduate from? Can you tell me how well you think your high school prepared you for the challenges of ECC?
- Where do you live? What is your local address, phone number, and email address to put in my file? Are you familiar with the email system on campus? Do you use it?
- Where are you in the math course sequence? Where are you in the English course sequence?
- Have you thought about your social science and Humanities courses?
- Have you taken any courses with your major yet? How are they going?
- Is there a specific aspect of your major that particularly interests you?
- What led you to choose this major?
- Are you involved in any kind of extra-curricular activities, such as campus groups or part-time jobs?
- Have you received any scholarships? If so, what is required for you to keep those scholarships?
- What are your goals after graduation from ECC (employment, further education, etc.)?
- What do you expect from me as your advisor?

You can use these questions as a guideline for initial sessions with students. You can also save the information from these questions in the student's folder. It is also a good idea to ask students for a resume to keep on file once they have created one to stay informed about their career goals and progress.

Sample Questions for Subsequent Meetings

Future meetings with advisees should attempt to make life at ECC as productive and trouble-free as possible. You should be ready to work with the student to help solve any problems that the student encounters. These meetings are also a time to make certain that the academic choices that students make correspond with their career goals.

- How are you enjoying life at ECC? Do you know where to get help if you encounter any problems? [Advisor may refer student to campus resources]
- How is each of your classes going? Do you know where to get help for these classes?
- In which academic areas do you still need to take courses before graduation?
- In which student activities and organizations are you currently involved? Do you know where you can find out more about campus activities?
- When do you plan to graduate? Will you be planning to do a co-op or gather any related professional experience before that time?
- Let's review a copy of your most recent resume. Have you contacted the Career Development Center?

Suggestions for improving communication:

1. **Opening**: Greet students by name; be relaxed, warm. Open with a question, e.g. "How are things going?" or "How can I help?"

2. **Phrasing Questions**: Conversational flow will be cut off if questions are asked so that a "yes" or "no" reply is required.

   A good question might be "What have you thought about taking next semester?" or "What are some things that have made you think about business as a career?"

3. **Out-Talking the Student**: Good advising is effective listening. Listening is more than the absence of talking. Identify the fine shades of feelings behind the words. [Effective listening shows that one cares, an important component of advising.]

4. **Accepting the Student's Attitudes and Feelings**: Students may fear that the advisor won't approve of what they say. You can acknowledge without approving.

   Advisors must convey their acceptance of student feelings and attitudes in a non-judgmental way. Cardinal principle: If the student thinks it is a problem, it is a problem. Or to quote Clellie Taylor, first Dean of the HCC LRC, "If your people think they need a broomstick, it does not matter if they really can fly around the room or sweep dirt...they need a broomstick"!

5. **Being Sensitive to the Special Needs of Diverse Populations and of International Students**: Such students may have special needs or may not be familiar with academic behaviors or procedures. Be open enough to allow students to discuss such problems.

6. **Cross Examining**: do not fire questions at the student like a machine gun.

7. **Silence in the Interview**: Most people are embarrassed if no conversation is going on. Remember that the student may be groping for words or ideas. (Be sure to realize, however, that silence has different meanings in different cultures.) So, tell the student, "It is okay to take a minute to organize your thoughts."
8. **Reflecting the Student's Feelings**: Try to understand what the student is saying. For example, it is better to say, "You feel that professor is unfair to you" rather than "Everyone has trouble getting along with professors sometimes."

9. **Admitting Your Ignorance** (It only hurts the first time): If a student asks a question regarding facts and you do not have the facts, admit it. Go to your resources for the information immediately or call the student back.

10. **Setting Limits on the Interview**: It is better if the advisor and the student realize from the beginning that the interview will last for a fixed length of time. Give the student an idea of what you have in mind.

11. **Ending the Interview**: Once limits have been set, it is best to end the interview at the agreed upon time. A comfortable phrase might be, "Do you think we have done all we can for today?" or "Let's make another appointment so that we can go into this further."

SECTION V
CONCLUSION: THE POWER OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

Few experiences in students' postsecondary career have as much potential for influencing their development as does academic advising.

Through regular contact with students--whether face-to-face, through the mail, on the telephone, or through computer mediated systems--advisors gain meaningful insights into student's academic, social, and personal experiences and needs.

Advisors use these insights to help students feel a part of the academic community, develop sound academic and career goals, and ultimately be successful learners.

Because of the nature of academic advising, advisors often develop a broad vision of the institution. Advisors can therefore play an important interpretive role with administrators, faculty, an staff, helping them further understand students' academic and personal development needs. Advisors can teach others to identify students who, with additional attention from academic support staff, may achieve their goals to succeed academically and personally.

Students place a great deal of trust in their advisors. That trust warrants quality programs and services. It is through our Core Values that students' expectations of academic advising are honored.

Beliefs about Students
Like other educators, academic advisors work to strengthen the importance, dignity, potential, and unique nature of each individual served within the academic setting. Our work as advisors is guided by our beliefs that:

- Students can be responsible for their own behavior;
- Students can be successful as a result of their individual goals and efforts;
- Students have a desire to learn;
- Learning needs vary according to individual skills, goals and experiences; and
- Students hold their own beliefs and opinions.

Why Our Core Values are Important
Out of these beliefs grow our Core Values. Regardless of our professional preparation and experience, each of us in the field of academic advising is ultimately guided in our work by what we perceive as important, what we value, and what we believe about those we serve--primarily students, but also others in the institutions within which we work, and even the institutions themselves.

We recognize the complex nature of academic advising, the wise variety of settings and tasks for which academic advisors are responsible, and the diverse backgrounds and experiences of academic advisors. Yet, while values and beliefs are by their very nature individual, there are many that are subscribed to by those who advise students. Through this statement of Core Values we communicate to others what they can expect from us. These Core Values may be used to validate our conduct in our diverse roles and our relationships within the academic community.

The Core Values

Students deserve dependable, accurate, respectful, honest, friendly, and professional service. In order to serve students well, academic advisors understand that they are responsible to many constituents who comprise our academic communities. This is the foundation on which the following Core Values rest.

Advisors are responsible to the students and individuals they serve. The cooperative efforts of all who advise help to deliver quality programs and services to students. These include, but are not limited to, giving accurate and timely information, maintaining regular office hours, and keeping appointments.

Advisors help students develop a perception of themselves and their relationship to the future. Advisors introduce students in a nurturing way to the world they are entering--teaching them to value the learning process, put the college experience into perspective, become more responsible, set priorities and evaluate sequences of events, and be honest with themselves.

Advisors encourage self-reliance by helping students make informed and responsible decisions, set realistic goals, and develop thinking, learning, and life management skills to meet present and future needs. Advisors work with students to help them accomplish the goals and objectives they have established for themselves. Advisors encourage students to be responsible for their own success and progress. They respect students' rights to their individual beliefs and opinions but are not dictated to by them.

Advisors work to modify barriers to student progress; identify burdensome, ineffective, and inefficient policies and procedures; and work to effect change. When the needs of students and the institution are in conflict, advisors seek a resolution that is in the best interest of both parties. Advisors inform students about appropriate grievance procedures in cases where students find the resolution unsatisfactory.

Advisors recognize the changing nature of the college and university environment and student body. They support students in appropriate ways (e.g., advocate at the administrative level for recognition of these changes; offer varied office hours; and acknowledge the special needs of all students and the pressures on them to juggle study with work, family, and other interpersonal demands).

Advisors are knowledgeable about and sensitive to federal, state, and their own institution's policies and procedures, especially those governing such matters as sexual harassment, personal relationships with students, privacy of student information, equal treatment, equal access, and equal opportunity.

Advisors respect the rights of students to have information about themselves kept confidential. Advisors share information with others about students and their programs only when both advisor and student believe that information is relevant and will result in increased information or assistance, assessment, and provision of appropriate services to the student.

Advisors gain access to and use computerized information about students only when that information is relevant to the advising they are doing with that particular student. Advisors enter or change information on students' records only when legitimately authorized to do so.

Advisors need to document advising contacts adequately to aid subsequent advising interactions.

Advisors are responsible for involving others, when appropriate, in the advising process. Effective advising requires a broad-based, or holistic, approach to working with students. Academic advisors develop crucial ties with others who assist students in diverse areas, such as admissions, orientation, financial aid, housing, health services, athletics, course selection and satisfaction of academic requirements, special physical and educational needs (e.g., disabilities, study skills, psychological counseling), foreign study, career development, co-curricular programs, and graduation clearance.

Advisors are facilitators and mediators. Responsible academic advisors recognize their limitations and use their specialized knowledge effectively.

To make connections between academic advising and other aspects of students' lives, advisors seek out resources provided by others. Referrals to these resources provide students with further assessments of their needs and access to appropriate programs and services. With other, advisors are responsible for helping students integrate the information they are confronted with and for helping students make well-informed academic decisions.

If peer advisors are used, the supervising advisor will closely monitor the peer advisor regarding adherence to appropriate policies and practices.

Advisors are responsible to the college or university in which they work. Advisors respect the opinions of their colleagues; remain neutral when students present them with comments, questions, or opinions about other faculty or staff; and are non-judgmental about academic programs.

Advisors increase their collective professional strength by sharing their philosophies and techniques with colleagues.

Advisors keep administrators who are not involved directly in the advising process informed and aware of the importance of academic advising in students' lives, and of the need for administrative support of advising and related activities.

Advisors abide by the specific policies, procedures and values of the department and institution for which they work. Where injustices occur and might interfere with students' learning, advisors advocate for change on behalf of students with the institution's administration, faculty, and staff.

Advisors are responsible to higher education generally. Academic advisors honor (and are protected by) the concept of academic freedom as practiced on our campuses. In this spirit, advisors hold a variety of points of view. Academic advisors are free to base their work with students on the most appropriate and optimum theories of college student development and models of delivery for academic advising programs and services.

Advisors accept that one of the goals of education is to introduce students to the world of ideas. One goal academic advising is to establish a partnership between student and advisor to guide students through their academic programs so they may attain the knowledge gained and offered by faculty.

Academic advisors believe that it is ultimately the responsibility of students to apply what they learn to everyday situations. Advisors help students in understanding this process.

Advisors advocate for students' educational achievement at the highest attainable standard and support student goals, as well as the educational mission of the institution.

Advisors advocate the creation or strengthening of programs and services that are compatible with students' academic needs.

Advisors are responsible to the community (including the local community, state, and region in which the institution is located. Academic advisors interpret the institution's mission, standards, goals, and values to its community, including public and private schools from which the college or university draws its student body. Likewise, advisors understand their student body and regularly inform the schools from which their students come about appropriate preparation so that students may perform successfully in higher education.

Advisors are sensitive to the values and mores of the surrounding community, sharing these with and interpreting them to students. Advisors are aware of community programs and services and may become models for students by participating in community activities themselves.

Advisors are responsible to their professional role as advisors and to themselves personally. To keep advising skills honed and interest high, advisors are encouraged to seek opportunities for professional development through classes, workshops, conferences, reading, consultation with others, and interaction in formal groups with other advisors (e.g., professional organizations like NACADA).

Advisors understand the demands on themselves that emerge from the service nature of the work they do. Advisors develop skills for taking care of themselves physically, emotionally, and spiritually. They learn how to detach themselves from students' problems while maintain a keen listening ear and providing sensitive responses. They establish and maintain appropriate boundaries. They need to be nurtured by others within the profession and they need to nurture their colleagues. They seek support for themselves within and outside the institution.

Academic advising lends itself well to research. Advisors may engage in research related to advising, and are encouraged to engage in research related to their own particular training and disciplinary backgrounds. Each research agenda must honor the institution's safeguards for privacy and humane treatment of subjects.

Characteristics of A Good Advisor

A good advisor:

1. Is personally and professionally interested in being an advisor.
2. Listens constructively, attempting to hear all aspects of students' expressed problems.
3. Sets aside enough regular scheduled time to adequately meet the advising needs of students assigned to him/her.
4. Knows school policy and practice in sufficient detail to provide students with accurate, usable information.
5. Refers students to other sources of information and assistance when referral seems to be the best, student-centered response to be made.
6. Recognizes the uniqueness of each student and accepts the individual student as a growing entity.
7. Views long-range planning as well as immediate problem-solving as an essential part of effective advising.
8. Shares his/her advising skills with working colleagues who also are actively involved with advising.
9. Continually attempts to improve both the style and substance of his/her advising role.
10. Willingly and actively participates in and completes advisor-training programs, both initial and in-service, when available.

30 Reminders for Effective Advising

1. Care about the students you advise by showing empathy, understanding, and respect.
2. Establish a warm, genuine, and open professional relationship.
3. Evidence interest, helpful intent, and involvement.
4. Be a good listener.
5. Establish rapport by remembering personal information about students that you advise.
6. Be available; keep office hours and appointments.
7. Provide accurate information.
8. When in doubt, refer to the catalog and advisor's manual.
9. Know how and when to make referrals, and be familiar with referral sources.

10. Don't refer too hastily; but don't attempt to handle situations for which you are not qualified.

11. Have students contact referral sources in your presence.

12. Contact students you advise frequently; don't always wait for students to come to you.

13. Don't make decisions for students; help them make their own decisions.

14. Focus on students' strengths and potential rather than limitations.

15. Seek out students you advise in informal settings.

16. Monitor students' progress toward educational goals.

17. Determine reasons for poor academic performance and direct students to support services.

18. Be realistic with the students you advise.

19. Use all available information sources.

20. Clearly and professionally, outline students' responsibilities.

21. Follow up on commitments made to the students you advise.

22. Encourage students to consider and develop career alternatives when appropriate.

23. Keep an anecdotal record of significant conversations for future reference.

24. Evaluate the effectiveness of your advising.

25. Don't be critical of other faculty or staff to students.

26. Be knowledgeable about career opportunities and job outlook for various majors.

27. Encourage students to talk by asking open-ended questions.

28. Don't betray confidential information.

29. Categorize students' questions; are they seeking action, information, or involvement and understanding.

30. Be yourself and allow students to be themselves.

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Directory for Referral

FOR INFORMATION ON:	CALL OFFICE OF:
Academic Policies and Faculty	Vice President of Instruction
Administrative Affairs	President
Admissions	Student Services
Adult Basic Education	Director of Literacy Education
Child Care	Student Services
Curriculum, Instruction	Vice President of Instruction
Distance Learning	Distance Learning Coordinator
Employment	Personnel Director
Enrollment Management	Vice President of Student Services
Extension Programs	Assoc. VP for Continuing Education
Evening College	Evening Director
Financial Aid	Financial Aid Office
Fiscal and Business Affairs	Vice President of Administrative Services
Foundation	Director of Resource Development
General Information	Director of Public Information
High School GED	Director of Literacy Education
Industrial Services	Director of Business/Industry Services
Learning Resources Center	Learning Resources Center
Job Placement	Director –Coop Education
Placement Testing	Student Services
Public Information/News Media	Director of Public Information
Registration	Student Services
Section 504, Rehabilitation Act	Student Services
Small Business	Small Business Coordinator
Student Services and Activities	Student Services
Student Records	Registrar
Student Records - Continuing Education	Continuing Education Secretary
Tech Prep	Assoc. VP for Curriculum
Transcripts	Registrar
Veterans' Assistance	Veterans Counselor